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Waukesha suspect's mom regrets bailing him out before parade attack: ex-girlfriend

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Updated

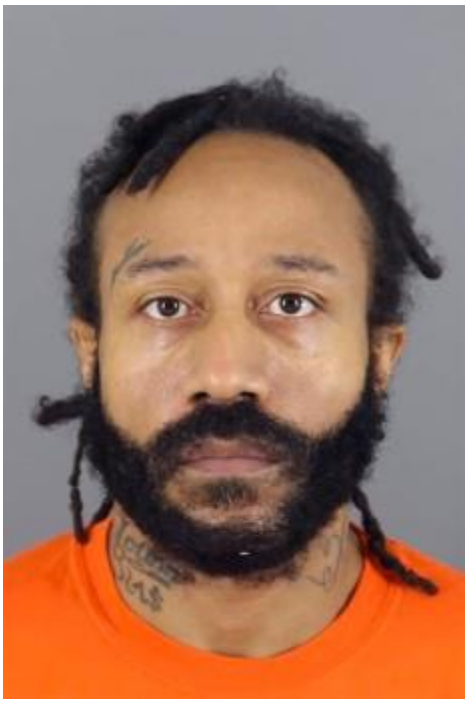
WAUKESHA, Wis. — The mother of the man accused of plowing his SUV into revelers at a suburban Milwaukee Christmas parade is wracked with regret for having bailed him out of jail just days earlier, his ex-girlfriend told The Post on Wednesday.

Dawn Woods wishes she hadn't posted the $1,000 bond for her son, Darrell Brooks Jr., after he was accused of punching the mother of his child and intentionally striking her with his car on Nov. 2, according to the woman.

"She's wrecked that people were killed as a result and she's like, 'I'm blaming myself, because had I not bailed him out, this wouldn't have happened,'" said the ex, who asked to remain anonymous out of fear for her and her son's safety.

The suburban Milwaukee resident, who also shares a child with Brooks, said she's had very little contact with the accused killer in the last 20 years, and that their son hasn't interacted with his dad since he was a baby.

"He disappeared when my son was almost 3 months old," she said. "I've done all of this on my own, raised my child by myself."



Dawn Woods blames herself for bailing Darrell Brooks Jr. out and allowing her son's alleged rampage in Waukesha, Wisconsin.Waukesha County Sheriff Office via AP

Days after he was released from jail — on what Milwaukee County prosecutors now say was "inappropriately low" bond — Brooks allegedly barreled past police barricades and onto the Waukesha Christmas parade route, where he mowed down marchers and spectators.

Brooks, 39, has been charged with five counts of first-degree intentional homicide for the Sunday rampage, which left six people dead and scores more injured. He faces a mandatory life sentence if convicted.

"When I saw his picture online, I was like, 'What the f–k?,'" his ex told The Post.

"I was embarrassed enough to have him as the father of my child beforehand, because he wasn't taking care of him," she said. "What do you think I am now? Mortified."

The distraught woman said she is disgusted by Brooks' actions and her connection to him, adding: "I wish I could replace him as the person I had a son with, but I can't."

"I am sickened by it, obviously devastated, can't sleep," she said. "I've been donating and saying prayers and doing everything that I can."

Anaji Brooks pleaded for a judge to issue Darrell Brooks Jr. a no-contact order after he shot at him in a fight over a cellphone in 2020.Facebook

"What's hurting me more is he shares DNA with my child."

Brooks has a lengthy rap sheet and has been criminally charged at least 16 times since 1999 in Wisconsin, Georgia and Nevada, according to authorities and records.

His ex said she found out a couple of years ago that Brooks has bipolar disorder, and his twin sister, Ebony, died in 2014 of an illness — possibly diabetic shock.

Though she's had little to do with Brooks since giving birth to their son, the woman said she still occasionally speaks to his mother, who "has never condoned any of his bad behavior."

— ADVERTISEMENT —

Darrell Brooks allegedly plowed an SUV into a crowd of people during a Christmas parade in Waukesha, Wisconsin.JESUS OCHOA via REUTERSDarrell Brooks Jr. was charged with five counts of homicide at the Waukesha County Courthouse.REUTERS/Daniel SteinleSix people were killed in the attack.JORDAN WOYNILKO via REUTERS

"She's always condemned everything that he's done … even weed possession, she's never condoned," the ex said. "She's always been very resolute on, 'You need to do better. You need to do right. This is not how I raised you.'"